

fitting expression, so we may be sure that neither of the definitions objected to is at all adequate as a symbol of the conception in the mind of its framer. In any case, Theism is not responsible for the imperfections of its advocates. A God who is vacillating, capricious, changeable, or who watches from a distance the independent movements of the world-machine He has constructed and set in motion, is certainly not calculated to call forth the highest reverence or the purest love of man. But this is not the conception which a contemplation of nature and of consciousness suggests. In the one, we discover, and are discovering more and more, the presence of a Power, whose majestic movements are regulated by the faultless rhythm of self-prescribed and inviolate law; the other, with its two facets, the intellectual and the moral,

leads directly to that Spirit "in whom we live and move and have our being." Although we are hemmed in by the restrictions of our short human life, mystified by the vagaries of our human minds, and misled by the aberrations of our human hearts, there has not been denied to us a real knowledge of Him whose ineffable splendour shines into the sphere of our earthly existence, and whose infinite perfections are fitted to satisfy our noblest emotions. If to hold this is to give way to Anthropomorphism, we are content to merit the taunt. Out of the fulness of his heart, Professor Tyndall speaks, in apt and beautiful words, of the humility and awe that a contemplation of the universe evokes; and these emotions he feels, because his whole spiritual nature is responsive to Him who is infinitely Intelligent and unchangeably Good.

b12.

THREE GENERATIONS.

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THREE generations ago carry back the imaginations and traditions of living men into a wonderfully different world from the present. By such few steps we get away from our Victorian era to a time when young George the Third declared himself proud of the name of Briton; and having made John Stuart, Earl of Bute, his Prime Minister: Smollett started the *Briton* as his organ, Wilkes and Churchill set the *North Briton* a-going in ironical antagonism to that ministerial broad-sheet; and by-and-bye there followed Grenville, Chatham, Junius, Lord North, with Lexington, Bunker's Hill, the surrender of General Burgoyne, and the Declaration of Independence which made such a new world of this western hemisphere.

The present is undoubtedly, in some sense or other, a product of all the past. But ac-

cording to one class of modern evolutionists, there is an actual transmission of mental and moral characteristics from generation to generation. Mr. Francis Galton in his "Hereditary Genius," and M. Theodore Ribot in his "Heredity," aim at showing that statesmen and philosophers, artists, poets, scholars, and orators, are all begotten in a succession of generations, like so many prize short-horns. From Thomas Pitt, Governor of Madras, have come Robert Pitt, of Boconnoc; William Pitt, Earl of Chatham; and then the younger William Pitt, the real ruler of England during very memorable years of the 18th and 19th centuries. Again, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, author of "The Botanic Garden," of "Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life," &c., had a son, Robert, a physician of note, and in due course a

grandson, Charles, known to all men as the author of "The Origin of Species," "The Descent of Man," and, in short, of Darwinism. Evolutionists, therefore, claim some show of reason in looking to the third generation for the harvesting of whatever seed-times of promise the men of mark of an elder time may supply. We do not, however, propose at present to discuss the bearing of the supposed "laws of heredity" in relation to "the bright particular stars" of that elder time when George III., a young and promising prince, revived the sentiments of loyalty among the descendants of the old English cavaliers and jacobites; and, as the great Whig historian says, with profane levity, "The Tories—who had always been inclined to King-worship, and who had long felt with pain the want of an idol before whom they could bow themselves down,—were as joyful as the priests of Apis, when, after a long interval, they had found a new calf to adore!" But, apart from all other reasons for not following down Smollett, Wilkes, Churchill, or "Junius" to their third generation, it may suffice as an adequate one that they never got so far. We propose, therefore, to glance at the working of this assumed law of transmission of mental and moral characteristics, and the consequent propagation of breeds of philosophers, economists, artists, and orators, in a humbler line of exemplars of this "survival of the fittest,"—to see, in fact, whether there is any prospect of begetting a breed of first-class preachers, of which we are as much in want at present as of any other intellectual commodity.

Among the characters that figure in Burns's "Ordination," "The Kirk's Alarm," "The Hely Fair," and others of his satirical poems, one of the heroes of "The Twa Herds"—the Rev. John Russell, of Kilmarnock,—was a man of local celebrity and unwonted force of character. He was a native of Morayshire, trained at the University of Aberdeen; and Hugh Miller is good authority for the fact that the race of Welches, Pedens, and Cargills of the old covenanting times was perpetuated to the north of the Grampians long after they had become the heroes of a past history in the south. Whether it was due to his northern birth and training, or solely to personal characteristics, certain it is that John Russell belonged to the same type of stern, Calvinistic preachers, in whom

the uncompromising spirit of the confessors of the times of the persecution survived into the eighteenth century. Buckle, who sought to reduce the phenomena of history to very simple laws, and brought them to bear in no very flattering manner on Scottish national story, nevertheless disbelieved in the possibility of perpetuating a race of Scottish puritans by hereditary succession. It may be of some interest now to trace out the evolutionary process as it has manifested itself in successive generations sprung from the vigorous stock of the Kilmarnock divine, whom Burns assailed with the bitterest shafts of his satire.

Hugh Miller furnishes, in his "Autobiography," a lively picture of the Grammar School of Cromarty, as it flourished in his own juvenile days, with a scholarly licentiate of the Kirk as parish schoolmaster, who "could appeal to the fact that no teacher in the north had ever sent more students to college, and that his better scholars almost always got on well in life." The building devoted to such excellent training was a long, low, straw-thatched school-house, looking out from the sea-shore on the Cromarty Firth, whither it had been removed from the vicinity of the parish church and the laird's pleasure grounds, because of sundry school-boy raids on the manor. While the parish school still occupied its older sheltered site, another licentiate of the Church of Scotland, John Russell, came from Moray to assume its mastership; and when Hugh Miller was still working as a mason on the Old Red Sandstone of Cromarty, he communicated to Allan Cunningham a vivid portraiture of the elder incumbent of the Parish Grammar School. There, as in the later spheres of his labour, his character was that of a stern disciplinarian, in whom the genial social elements by no means predominated. The traditions of the Cromarty Parish School sufficiently prefigured the character of his later career as a preacher and parish minister.

"There in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in the morning's face."

But though, so far, the Auburn school-master of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" may serve as a prototype of the Cromarty

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dominie, the later touches of his portraiture seem to have been wanting. The busy whisper did indeed "convey the dismal tidings when he frowned," but we hear of no laughing with counterfeited glee at any of his jokes. "He was," says Hugh Miller, "a large, robust, dark-complexioned man, imperturbably grave, fierce of temper, and had a stern expression of countenance. It is said that a lady, who had been one of his pupils, actually fainted when she heard him, many years afterwards, speak of transgressions, from the pulpit;" and an unfortunate youth who had incurred his ire by the loss of the school door-key, with consequent suspicion of conspiring to secure an enforced holiday, is reported, when he grew to manhood, in all cases of mental perturbation, to have groped in his pocket as he did on that fatal morning for the missing key.

As with many another probationer of the Church, the Cromarty Grammar School was only a temporary resting-place for its master. Like Dominie Sampson, he was beset with the ambition to "wag his pow in a pulpit," and with better aptitude for success. With a powerful voice, ready fluency of language, and a thorough mastery of the points of Calvinistic theory, he found opportunities for exercising his gifts as a preacher to such good purpose that his fame extended far to the south of the Grampians; and, as Hugh Miller says, "it was not an unwelcome call, to some of the citizens of Cromarty, which took him from the parish Grammar School to a chapel of ease in Kilmarnock." Nevertheless, their interest in him was not wholly at an end. One of his pupils, when, at a later date, in the west of Scotland, walked to Mauchline on learning that his old school-master was to preach. The occasion was one of those sacramental gatherings commemorated in Burns's "Holy Fair." On such celebrations of the Holy Communion in rural Scottish parishes, the people gathered from far and near, as at a modern camp meeting; and although the communicants partook of the sacrament within the church, the preaching was carried on in the open air, where a succession of ministers occupied the "tent," or movable pulpit, and preached often to thousands gathered from the surrounding parishes, or attracted from greater distances by the fame of some popular preacher. But such assemblages, like those with which we are familiar in Canadian and American

camp meetings, naturally attracted many more than those who came devoutly bent on sharing in the religious services. It was common for servants to make a special provision for liberty to attend the fairs and sacraments of the district; and hence such assemblages were apt to partake of features little in harmony with the solemnity of the rite which gave rise to them.

The scene of Burns's "Holy Fair" is laid in the church-yard of Mauchline; and on the special occasion described by Russell's old Cromarty pupil, the proceedings appear to have fully realized the poet's satirical depictions of the rivalry between "The Holy Rostrom" and "The Change House." "There was" he says, "an excellent sermon to be heard from the tent, and excellent drink to be had in a neighbouring ale-house, and between the two the people seemed much divided. A young clergyman was preaching, and Russell was nigh him. At every fresh movement of the people, or ungodly burst of sound from the ale-house, the latter would raise himself on tiptoe, look sternly towards the Change House, and then at his younger brother in the pulpit. At last his own time to preach arrived: he sprang into the pulpit, closed the Bible, and without psalm, prayer, or other preliminary matter, burst out in a passionate and eloquent address upon the folly and sin which a portion of the people were committing. The sounds in the ale-house ceased; the inmates came out, and listened to the denunciation, which some of them remembered with a shudder in after-life."

For effective open-air preaching, under such circumstances, a powerful voice was indispensable, and all reports confirm the truth of the satirist's allusions to this special qualification. An Ayrshire correspondent of Dr. Robert Chambers says, "He was the most tremendous man I ever saw. Black Hugh Macpherson was a beauty in comparison. His voice was like thunder." In the satirical allegory of "The Holy Tulzie," where he figures as one of the "twa herds," "his voice was heard through muir and dale;" and in "The Holy Fair" it is represented as bursting forth like the warning blast of a trumpet, on just such a scene of dissipation as that which his old pupil witnessed:

"But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts
Till a' the hills are rainin'.

And echoes back return the shouts—
 Black Russell is na sparlin'.
 His piercing words, like Highland swords,
 Divide the joints and marrow;
 His talk o' hell, whare devils dwell,
 Our very souls does harrow.
 A vast, unbottom'd, boundless pit,
 Filled fou o' lowin' brunstane,
 Wha's ragin' flame, and scorching heat,
 Wad melt the hardest whunstane!"

Hugh Miller, when referring to the so-journ of Mr. Russell at Cromarty, speaks of him, in his earlier capacity, as "one of those who mistake severity for duty;" and Dr. Chambers has embodied the unfriendly portraiture of their old minister by Kilmarnock correspondents in curt description, as "a huge, dark-complexioned, stern-looking man, of tremendous energy in the pulpit, of harsh, unloving nature, and a powerful defender of the strongholds of Calvinism." By more friendly traditions, and the reminiscences of his own family, his manner of preaching is described as strong and energetic, and his style enlivened by homely but effective illustration. He was obviously no commonplace man: a rousing preacher of the genuine old Puritan type, well suited to his own day, whatever might be thought of him now. The dark times of persecution and devout self-sacrificing piety were being replaced by the new lights of Bolingbroke and Hume. The Moderate party was supreme in the Church, and the seeds were already sowing which ripened into secession and final disruption. Against the backslidings of such an age Russell protested with honest zeal, and dwelt upon the eternity of future punishment—so much cavilled at in our own day,—as a doctrine best fitted for the evil generation in which his lot was cast.

The stern old preacher was none the less acceptable to the austere and grave, God-fearing admirers of his doctrine, because of the satire to which its uncompromising proclamation subjected him. He was translated from Kilmarnock to the High Church of Stirling, where he lived to a great age, and was always the same dauntless and intrepid man. Some of his sermons have been printed; they are mostly of a controversial nature, written in a bold, rugged style of rough eloquence, which depended for its full effect on the speaker. Hugh Miller adds this reminiscence of his latter days: "When seventy years old he saw a Cromarty man beaten down in the streets of

Stirling. Russell elbowed the crowd aside, plucked the sufferer like a brand from the burning, saying: 'Wae's me that your father's son should behave like a blackguard in the town where I am a minister.'" It is added that he mellowed with time, grew temperate in his preaching as he advanced in years, and became a great favourite with the more grave and staid portion of his people. His name was long had in remembrance in Stirling as the venerable and eloquent preacher of an elder generation.

John Russell had a son, who was educated at the University of Glasgow, entered the Church, and obtained the presentation to the parish of Muthil, in Perthshire. There, in our own younger days—too young to retain much more than some general impression of the scene,—we have heard him preach in the old Norman parish church, long since superseded by a more convenient but less attractive edifice. He, too, was a tall, robust, dark-complexioned man, of grave, austere manners, and a preacher possessed of unwonted powers of oratory. He was accordingly selected to succeed Dr. Chalmers in St. John's parish, Glasgow; but before he could be inducted into his new charge, his death—followed soon after by that of his widow,—left three sons and a daughter as the orphan wards of an uncle and aunt. Of those, the second son, James M. Russell, manifested rare ability. As a student at the University of Edinburgh, he greatly distinguished himself, and was just finishing his course with the highest honours, when he fell a victim to consumption, within a few months after completing his twenty-first year. Among the remains which served to illustrate the promise of genius, and the facility of his versatile pen, was a collection of pieces in verse, copied for the most part into a MS. volume of his own and his cousins' productions, and adorned by one of them with grave and humorous crow-quill etchings. Subsequently, on the death of his cousin, a volume of poems was privately printed, with the title, "Memorials of Cousins," and a brief preface, in which it is stated: "Many years ago it was the desire of George Wilson that verses written by his cousin, James Russell, should be printed along with some by himself, and that the volume should bear the title given to this one. The long-cherished project has now been carried out." It might, perhaps, have

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added an interest to the little memorial volume, printed only for a select circle of friends, if the fact had been recalled that the sweet and graceful verse of one of the cousins was the sole memorial of a youth of rare promise—gentle, kindly, and full of humour, the grandson of the stern old preacher of Mauchline “Holy Fair,” and of the High Kirk of Stirling,—who, had he survived, gave promise of adding to the vigorous eloquence of two generations of preachers, the tenderness and genial humour in which they were deficient.

One living representative of the younger generation still furnishes to such evolutionists as M. Ribot and Mr. Francis Galton a plea for their assumption of the hereditary transmission of mental as well as physical attributes. The youngest of the third generation in descent from Burns's theological *bête noire*, the Very Rev. Alexander Russell, is now Dean of Adelaide, South Australia. It is to be feared that, could the venerable incumbent of the High Kirk of Stirling have looked down the vista of the future, and realized the evolutionary processes which, after the lapse of only one generation, were to bring forth from the loins of the stern old Calvinistic preacher, to whom Prelacy and Popery were alike abhorrent, a full-blown Dean of the Anglican Church, it would scarcely have diminished his wrath to know that his descendant was to reproduce, at the antipodes, not a little of the hereditary powers of an eloquent and popular preacher. In thus seeking to follow up such inherited relations between “the dead and the living,” the following piece, selected from the privately printed volume of “Poems: Memorials of Cousins,” may have an additional interest, apart from its own merits, as the product of the grandson of the famous old preacher against whom Burns directed his roughest satire; and who, it is scarcely to be doubted, regarded verse-making as one of the many follies by which the profane are wont to abuse the precious gift of time:—

THE DEAD AND THE LIVING.

* * * * *

We make them a hidden quiet room
Far in the depth of our spirit's gloom,
There, oh there, do the loved abide,
Shadowy, silent, sanctified !
Thither, oh thither, wrung with woe,
In yearning love we often go !
We see their face in its living grace,
And the dear old look of its kindness trace.
We hear the words of their tender breath,
(Are they in life or we in death ?)
But the beauty bright they were wont to have,
Is damp and dim as with the grave ;
And each form a funeral garment wears,
And our eye is blind with a mist of tears.
There is piteous wail amid our meeting,
We sigh and sob our words of greeting,
We feel their arms around our heart,
In a fond and heavy wining,
And clinging so they may ne'er depart
From the gaze of our tearful pining ;
And so by night and through the day
Wailing and death are ours alway.—

And is it so ? is it God's decree,
That we can have only misery ?
We thank Thee, O Lord ! for the mercy given,
In the hopes of the better life of heaven.
We praise and bless Thy holy grace,
Our dead are alive in a pleasant place ;
That while our hearts are sore with weeping
They are safe in Thy kindly keeping,
That Thou hast told us how blest they be
In the fold of Thy great felicity.

Do we weep for them ? Do our spirits mourn
They shall ne'er to our eye, to our ears return ?
It is they who live, those souls alone,
Holy and happy around the Throne ;
It is they should lament for us that are
From the Eternal Life so far ;
With souls of sin and a feeble breath,
It is we, it is we who pine in death.

Let us then no more muse sadly back,
To the ancient times of our earthly track,
As if death like a deep and dreary river
Had drowned the joy from our hearts for ever ;
Let our souls look on—and if eyes are wet,
Be it not the tear of a vain regret—
But started and lit by an earnest faith
In the blissful words which the Scripture saith
Of the excellent joys that crown the dead
Of every one of the Faithful Dead !

CHARITY.

DRESSED in robes of purest white,
Round her head a silver zone ;
In her hand she bore a light,
Through the darkness of the night,
Seeking out the lost and lone.

Through the city's noisome lanes
Onward speed her gentle feet,
Till at length a spot she gains
Where in all its direness reigns,
Poverty in dark retreat.

Softly doth she ope the door
Of a chamber filled with grief ;
On the cold unmatted floor,
Lieth one who nevermore
May in this world find relief.

O'er the widow's corse she bends,
While her cheeks are wet with tears ;
And her prayer to heaven ascends,
Unto Him who ever lends
Strength to guard the young in years.

Fondly pressing to her heart
A little girl in deep distress,
She doth of her means impart
Aid to mitigate the smart
Of cold hunger's bitterness.

And, ere she departs, her voice
Is heard in sweet and soothing strain ;
She bids the weeping child rejoice,
Since God, of whom He loves, makes choice,
And lifts the burden of their pain.

Thus doth Charity pursue
Ever thoughtfully her way—
All her mercies hid from view,
Empty praise she doth eschew,
And vainglorious display.